



## *The President's Daily Brief*

*15 July 1971*

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*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

We now have good evidence that the Chinese Communists rejected as inadequate a Soviet proposal in March for a pact renouncing use of force in the border area pending a final frontier settlement. (Page 1)

In Laos, the Communists have sharply rejected Prime Minister Souvanna's proposal of 5 July for a cease-fire on the Plaine des Jarres. (Page 2)

North Vietnam apparently has received pledges of increased military aid from various Communist capitals. (Page 3)

The Jordanian Army drive against fedayeen strongholds in the north has entered its third day. (Page 4)

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COMMUNIST CHINA - USSR

Chou En-lai told [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that China had rejected a Moscow proposal, made just before the Soviet party congress in March, for a pact renouncing the use of force in the border dispute for a three-year period during which a frontier settlement would be negotiated. The premier stated that Peking considered the offer a plot and that Moscow's real intention was to create an impression of Communist unity in its dealings with the US while in fact putting off the entry into force of such an agreement.

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*The Chinese demand, as a precondition for discussion of border demarcation, that there be a preliminary protocol regarding conduct along the border, and that the protocol include a nonaggression clause.*

*Moscow's position had been that a nonaggression pact is best concluded simultaneously with a boundary agreement. The new Soviet "flexibility" presumably is designed to blunt charges by China that it is being forced to negotiate under military pressure. Although Moscow has no illusions about the likelihood of reaching a border settlement, it may hope that satisfaction of China's demand for a "preliminary protocol" can be used to obscure continuing Sino-Soviet difficulties. Peking, however, seems to feel that border tension has lessened and state relations have improved so that there is no need to reach agreement in the near future.*

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## LAOS

*In a tough and unyielding letter to Souvanna on 11 July, Lao Communist leader Souphanouvong stated that Souvanna's proposal of 5 July for a cease-fire on the Plaine des Jarres was in effect a rejection of the Communist proposal for a countrywide cease-fire. Souphanouvong argued that imposing a countrywide cease-fire was within the power of the Laotian parties, and that in rejecting it Souvanna was serving US interests. This is an allusion to the fact that a countrywide cease-fire would affect the US bombing program in the infiltration corridor.*

*The letter comes down hard on Vang Pao's current offensive on the Plaine, which it describes as an "extremely serious" act. It ties Souvanna's proposal of 5 July to the offensive and implies that it is evidence that Vientiane is not genuinely interested in reaching a settlement. The letter makes no reference to withdrawing the "special emissary" who is in Vientiane or to breaking contacts with the government. The Communists may still hope that they can convince Souvanna that it is in the government's interest to be more accommodating to their demands for talks.*

*The tone of the letter, however, suggests that the Communists doubt there will be progress toward negotiations until the military situation on the Plaine turns again to their advantage.*

*The Souphanouvong letter may take the edge off the high spirits now enjoyed by the leaders in Vientiane, but it is not likely to change orders to Vang Pao to take as much territory as he can. It would be both politically and psychologically difficult for Souvanna to rein in his troops when they have the upper hand; furthermore, he believes that gains on the ground will strengthen his future bargaining position. Souvanna evidently has little expectation that the Communists are interested in a partial stand-down in north Laos, and the chances for early meaningful negotiations are therefore slim. In its insistence on a nationwide cease-fire, the latest Souphanouvong letter will only reinforce the view that there is nothing to negotiate about at this juncture.*

*FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY*

**NORTH VIETNAM**

A military delegation headed by a North Vietnamese vice minister of defense returned to Hanoi early this month after a month-long trip to Peking and undisclosed European Communist capitals. The delegation apparently sought and received commitments for increased military aid.

The North Vietnamese press--which has been reticent about the trip--has noted only that a new supplementary military aid agreement has been concluded with the Chinese.

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JORDAN

The army's drive against fedayeen strongholds in northern Jordan is now in its third day. King Husayn has committed a significant force, including tanks and infantry, to the fight, and the tide apparently is going against the fedayeen. Government troops appear to be in control of the Gaza refugee camp and surrounding areas but are still trying to dislodge fedayeen who are dug into the neighboring heights.

*Arab reaction to the government's latest offensive against the fedayeen has been relatively muted. Egypt felt it necessary to postpone King Husayn's visit scheduled for 23 July but ascribed the delay to pre-occupation with a political conference. An official spokesman expressed hope that Amman would respond to Egyptian-Saudi efforts to mediate the conflict with the fedayeen. Syrian statements perfunctorily deplored the fighting. The Syrians, who are worried about fedayeen on their own soil, are said to have promised the Jordanians to prevent any commandos from firing across the border into Jordan.*

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NOTES

Malta: Mintoff's action yesterday in terminating current arrangements for NATO facilities and forces in Malta makes the uncertain UK-Malta negotiations even more important if the West is to retain a base on the island. Although Mintoff wants to retain a British presence there, he obviously wants to get as good a deal as he can. He continues to play it tough with London. Yesterday afternoon he said he did not want the British negotiating mission under present circumstances, and this caused London to recall Defense Secretary Lord Carrington's plane from the runway as it was about to leave for Malta. The British representative to NATO, on instructions from London, has asked the other Allies if they would be willing to help pay the amount required to come to terms with Mintoff on the base issue.

Morocco: Security officials claim that, of the 1,500 insurgents involved in Saturday's coup attempt, 168 were killed, 650 have been captured, and 500 or so have fled; about 100 apparently rallied to the King, but their fate remains uncertain.

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Bolivia:

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